ORIGINAL SERMONS,

Printed in imitation of Manuscript,

By the Rev. Theops. J. St. John, LL.B.

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No. 1. An earnest Exhortation to the Sacrament. Luke 14. 18.—(2) On the Sabbath. Ezek. 20. 20.—(3) Brotherly Love. 1 John 4. 12.—(4) A Death unto Sin, &c. Eph. 5. 14.—(5) On the Intercession. Heb. 7. 25.—(6) Duty of Parents. Prov. 22. 6.—(7) Minister and People. 1 Cor. 4. 2.—(8) The Death of Christ. Heb. 12. 2.—(9) The Love of God. Mat. 12. 30.—(10) A Post Communion Sermon. Titus 2. 8. (11) Compassion. Job 19. 21.—(12) Honesty. Deut. 25. 14, 15.—(13) Paul before Felix. Acts 24. 25.—(14) Repentance. Acts 26. 20.—(15) Preparation for Sacrament. 1 Cor. 11. 28.—(16)

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No. 45. On obedience to the Gospel.

Matthew 7th, 21st Verse.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

The great design of Christianity is to destroy the works of the Devil; to dispossess him of that unjust dominion he had long usurp'd over us, and to restrain that unlimited power with which "the Prince of the "Air" worked in the children of disobedience.

Conducive to this were all the precepts of the Gospel, the example of the life and the merits of the death of the Author of it; all that He ever taught, or suffered, or purchased for us. And in order to secure the victory He himself had in person obtained over the common enemy of God and man, and to make it perpetual, He engages all his followers in the vigorous pursuit of it;—bids them renounce the world upon their first coming into it, and obliges them to declare against the "Devil and all his

" works, and promise to continue his faithful soldiers " and servants to their lives end." This is the first engagement of our Christian life, and ought to be the first endeavor of it.

But these things, alas! are but seldom considered as they ought, by the greater part of those who make profession of Christianity. Few men 'tis true there are but have so much respect for their Saviour, and esteem for themselves, as highly to value the being called by his name—and they would be very angry with that man that should offer to persuade them they were not Christians. They mightily insist on the great privilege of the Gospel, and the glorious title of the Sons of God, tho' they care not to perform the conditions of the former, nor to express the obedience of the latter: They glory in nothing so much as in the Cross of Christ; tho' God knows, there appears as little of its power in their lives, as of its sign in their foreheads; and as little to be discovered of the design of their baptism in the one, as of its ceremony

in the other. But our blessed Saviour himself assures us, 'tis in vain, that men call him Lord, Lord, and do not the things which He commands them—— 'tis in vain that they profess him with their mouths, and deny him in their works. And this our Saviour enforces in the words of the Text—"Not every "one that saith unto me," &c.

In this discourse I shall shew, first, what particular obligations our blessed Saviour lays on every one who calls Him Lord, Lord, to do the will of His Father which is in heaven.

And secondly, by a practical exhortation to persuade you to "walk worthy the vocation whereunto ye "are called."

First, then I shall endeavor to shew what particular obligations our blessed Saviour lays on every one that calls him Lord, Lord, to do the will of His Father which is in Heaven.

And this He does more especially as their Prophet, their Priest, and their King. Indeed had our

bleſsed Saviour choſe rather to adapt his Religion to the weakneſs of the fleſh, than the purity of the Spirit;—had he, by a plenary indulgence, of all unrighteousneſs and ungodly lusts, bribed our senses to corrupt our faith, then might we ſtill continue in our sins and be innocent. But be not deceived—" The " law of the Lord is an undefiled law; pure, even " as He is pure" that made it, and reſembles in every part of it, the fountain of holineſs from whence it flows. The wicked man meets with as little encouragement in our Saviour's precepts, as he does in his practice:—Sin is equally diſclaimed of both, neither committed in the one, nor alloved of in the other. Where does the Goſpel denounce its threatnings againſt the good? or where are its promiſes made to the wicked? Nay does it not extend the Chriſtian's purity to his thoughts, and his charity to his very enemies, confined by Moſes and by nature to his actions and his friends? Is it not its particular care to diſcountenance ſin where-ever it meets it? And is not a con-

siderable part of it employed in acquainting us, that therefore God was made like to man, that man might become more like unto God; "that the man of God "might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good "works."

"Thou art inexcusable therefore O man, who-"soever thou art, that calleſt Lord, Lord, and doſt "not the things which He ſays:" Better were it for thee to be a ſtranger to the Covenant of Grace, than to know and to tranſgreſs it. Better if like the Heathen thou hadſt no knowledge of thy Saviour's laws, than at once to profeſs and violate them. As for the Heathen they have the luſt of their gods to plead in excuſe for their own licentiouſneſs—gods that practiſed iniquity themſelves, and might therefore be fairly preſumed to allow it in their followers. "But thou man of God flee theſe things." The God whom thou ſerveſt is an holy God; a God in-capable of iniquity himſelf, and a puniſher of it in others; a God who has often and aloud "revealed his

" wrath from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and " unrighteouſneſs of men"—from whence alſo He himſelf came down to deſtroy ſin, and to " redeem us " from all iniquity."

How powerfully does the High-Prieſt of our profeſſion oblige all who have faith in his Blood, or hopes in its benefits, to do the things which He ſays? How pathetically do his eloquent wounds—thoſe his ſtripes with which we are healed—addreſs every paſſion of our ſouls, and engage to an univerſal obedience? Could the Father part with his only Son—the Son with his Father, and his life for our ſakes, and ſhall we not renounce the ſhort pleaſures of ſin for theirs?—of ſin the great alloy of our preſent—and deſtruction to our future happineſs!

But in vain has the Son of God purchaſed a reconciliation for us by his Blood, if we are ſtill enemies in our minds by wicked works. They only perceive the benefits of their Saviour's death who are planted into the likeneſs of it. In vain is our

"High-Priest entered into the Heavens, there to "make intercession for us, unless we be like Him, "holy, blameless, undefiled, and separate from sin-"ners." If we continue in our sins, his importunate Sacrifice will not be our Advocate, but our Accuser;—instead of expiating, aggravate our guilt; and instead of those assistances of the Blessed Spirit, and the gifts it obtains for them that do the will of God, draw down upon us the curses of God in this life, and his heavy displeasure in the next.

I come now to shew how we are obliged by confessing Christ our King, "to do the things which "He says."

If sin have the dominion over us, the kingdom of Christ cannot be within us. We are indeed the Devil's servants as long as we obey him—Like the soldiers that crucified Christ, we salute Him King and mock Him—we crown Him with one hand and smite him with the other, and with the same breath confess and insult his Authority. We

ſtifle his co-operating Grace, and his Bleſſed Spirit, the ſacred Miniſter of his kingdom by which he rules in the children of obedience—and like the rebellious citizens in the Goſpel—will not ſuffer Him to reign over us.

The kingdom of Chriſt, as the Apoſtle tells us, is not in word only, but in power:—It ſignifies ſomething more than a bare title, or an empty name. It diſcovers itſelf in the heart of every real chriſtian by action and influence, is employed in demoliſhing the Old-Man and repairing the New, in reducing every corrupt and inordinate affection and luſt; all the powers of the ſoul and body being made ſubject unto it.

But as we muſt not reſiſt the kingdom of Chriſt within ourſelves, ſo are we obliged to advance the progreſs of it in others. "Chriſt, we know, muſt reign "till He have put all things under Him—till "He have made the heathen His heritage, and the "uttermoſt parts of the earth His poſſeſſion." And it is the buſineſs of all who fight under the great

Captain of their salvation, to contribute as largely as they can to the success of his arms, to advance the Holy-Standard, to push on the victories of the Cross, and "to add daily to his Church such as may be "saved." But

With what face or with what success can we discourse to an obstinate Jew, or the ignorant Gentile of the glorious liberty of the sons of God, whilst we ourselves are the servants of corruption? How shall we convince them of the miracles of our Saviour, and the mighty signs and wonders wrought by his name; that the dead were raised and the devils confounded at it—when they see us buried yet in our sins, and slaves to the Devil who professes it? To these faithless servants belongs that sentence denounced by Christ on the Scribes and Pharisees:—Woe unto you rebellious people—for ye shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men;—for ye neither go in yourselves—neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in: Woe unto them! they shall one day feel the fury of his

Kingdom, who would not ſubmit to the gentleneſs of it. He ſhall then cauſe his enemies to be ſlain before Him, who would not that He ſhould reign over them, and who by their own rebellion encouraged that of others.

I now proceed, in the ſecond place, to exhort all who embrace Chriſtianity, to fulfil its conditions.

If Chriſt be our Prophet, let us walk as becomes his Goſpel;—if our Prieſt, let our ſins be the ſacrifice; if our King, let us by obeying Him ourſelves, encourage others to obey Him likewiſe. We muſt not henceforth live as the other Gentiles do; like thoſe who walk on ſtill in darkneſs. Our lives muſt ſpeak a Chriſtian, ſomething more than man, faith more excellent than ſenſe—and revelation than unaſſiſted reaſon. We muſt walk like men that have the cleareſt diſcovery of their duty; the greateſt aſſiſtances in the diſcharge, and the higheſt rewards for the performance of it; like men acquainted with the means of grace, and encouraged by the hopes of glory.

Thou that makeſt thy boaſt of Chriſt, diſhonoureſt thou Chriſt? God forbid! Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, if your righteouſneſs exceed not the righteouſneſs of the ignorant Heathen; they who have no knowledge of our Saviour's laws; if we who have ſo excellent a form of Godlineſs in our principles, expreſs not the power of it in our actions, it will be more tolerable for them than for us: Many of them deſired to ſee the things which we have ſeen——but could not see them, who had they obtained their wiſh, would probably have made better uſe of thoſe bleſſed opportunities many of us do ſo undeſervedly enjoy.

Then ſhall the children of darkneſs riſe up in judgment againſt the children of light, and condemn them becauſe their works were evil. Then ſhall they in the face of all the world reproach our ſins as the great obſtacles of their converſion: In vain then ſhall we appeal to the Son of Man, our Brother, and our Judge:——In vain then ſhall we plead our relation to Him and the merits of his Croſs: Chriſt and

his Cross will profit us nothing: Nay the very Saviour in whom we trust will condemn us.

In vain will they say unto Him in that day, those who have professed Him in word only, not in deed and in truth—"Lord! Lord! have we not pro-"phesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out "devils, and in thy name done many wonderful "works?" All this will avail them nothing:—They want that sure and faithful "seal, by which the "Lord knoweth them that be his:—He will profess "unto them—He never knew them;" and pronounce that terrible but righteous sentence, "depart from me, "ye workers of iniquity."

From which God of his infinite mercy deliver us all, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, our only Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

Entered at Stationers' Hall.

Theoph^{s}. J. St. John.

Sickness. James 5. 14.—(40) Afflictions. Psalm 85. 8.—(41) Entrance to Cure. 2 Cor. 4. 5.—(42) Day of Judgment. Acts 17. 31.—(43) Censure. Mat. 7. 1.—(44) Charity. 1 John 3. 17.—(45) On the Gospel Precepts. Mat. 7. 21.—(46) Dives and Lazarus. Luke 16. 22.—(47) Man's fall and restoration. 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.—(48) Good Samaritan. Luke 10. 36, 37.—(49) Conscience. 2 Cor. 1. 12.—(50) Nature of New-Birth. John 3. 3. (51) Abraham offering Isaac. Gen. 22. 2.—(52) Loss of Soul. Mat. 16. 26.

Extract of a Letter from a Dignitary to his Nephew.

On my return to ——— I found my Congregation and Communicants prodigiously increased, my Curate had used Mr. St. John's MSS. Sermons, with which my Parishioners are much pleased, and, I hope, improved. They are wrote upon the Plan recommended by Dr. Blair in his Lectures; the conclusions are in general so very pathetic and persuasive, that they scarce can fail of producing a good effect.